

REMARKS

This Amendment and Response to Office Action is submitted in response to the outstanding Office Action mailed January 5, 2004. Claims 48-76 are pending in the above-referenced application. The Examiner rejected claims 48-58, 60-63, and 65-72 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Claims 73-76 have been allowed, and the Examiner indicated that claims 59 and 64 define allowable subject matter. By this paper, claims 48, 55, 56, 60, 68, and 71 have been amended to include the substantive limitations of the allowed claims in the case. Claims 59 and 64 have been cancelled. In view of the following remarks, reconsideration and allowance of claims 48-58, 60-63, and 65-76 are respectfully requested.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS 48, 49, 50, 52, 60, 61, AND 65 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a) OVER NEIDERT IN VIEW OF KESHAVARAJ

The Examiner rejected claims 48, 49, 50, 52, 60, 61, and 65 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,176,513 to Neidert (hereinafter “Neidert”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,299,204 to Keshavaraj (hereinafter “Keshavaraj”). By this paper, claims 48 and 60 have been amended to include limitations corresponding to those of claims 59 and 64, for which allowability was indicated by Examiner. Thus, claims 48 and 60, as amended, are also allowable. Claims 49, 50, and 52 depend from claim 48, and claims 61 and 65 depend from claim 60. Accordingly, claims 49, 50, 52, 61, and 65 are allowable for the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

It will be understood that the phrase “substantially different materials,” as used in this application, does not require that there be a complete lack of overlap in the materials used to form two items. Rather, the phrase encompasses items in which the largest constituent material, by weight, of one item is not the same as the largest constituent material, by weight, of another item. Additionally, the phrase includes items in which the largest constituent raw substances are the same, but the raw substance of one item is intermingled with other substances or otherwise processed mechanically and/or chemically to cause the item to have material properties significantly different from those of the other item. As used in the phrase “substantially different materials,” a “material” refers to a specific substance (*e.g.*, Nylon 6, 6) and not a general class of substances (*e.g.*, plastic).

REJECTION OF CLAIMS 67 AND 70 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a) OVER NEIDERT IN VIEW OF KESHAVARAJ

The Examiner rejected claims 48, 49, 50, 52, 60, 61, and 65 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Neidert in view Keshavaraj and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,423,273 to Hawthorn et al. (hereinafter “Hawthorn”). By this paper, claim 68 has been amended to include limitations corresponding to those of claim 59, for which allowability was indicated by Examiner. Claim 48 is allowable for the reasons set forth previously. Claims 67 and 70 depend from claims 48 and 68, respectively, and are thus allowable for the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS 51, 53, 54, 55-58, 62, 63, 66, 68, 69, 71, AND 72 UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a) OVER NEIDERT IN VIEW OF KESHAVARAJ AND FURTHER IN VIEW OF VEIGA

The Examiner rejected claims 48, 49, 50, 52, 60, 61, and 65 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Neidert in view of Keshavaraj and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,239,046 to Veiga et al. (hereinafter “Veiga”). By this paper, claims 55, 56, and 71 have been amended to include limitations corresponding to those of claims 59 and 64, for which allowability was indicated by Examiner. Thus, claims 55, 56, and 71, as amended, are also allowable. Claims 48, 60, and 68 are allowable for the reasons set forth previously. Claims 51, 53, and 54 depend from claim 48, claims 57 and 58 depend from claim 56, claims 62, 63, and 66 depend from claim 60, claim 69 depends from claim 68, and claim 72 depends from claim 71. Accordingly, claims 51, 53, 54, 57, 58, 62, 63, 66, 69, and 72 are allowable for the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants submit that claims 48-58, 60-63, and 65-76 are in a condition for allowance. If there are any remaining issues preventing allowance of the pending claims, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned.

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Respectfully submitted,



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